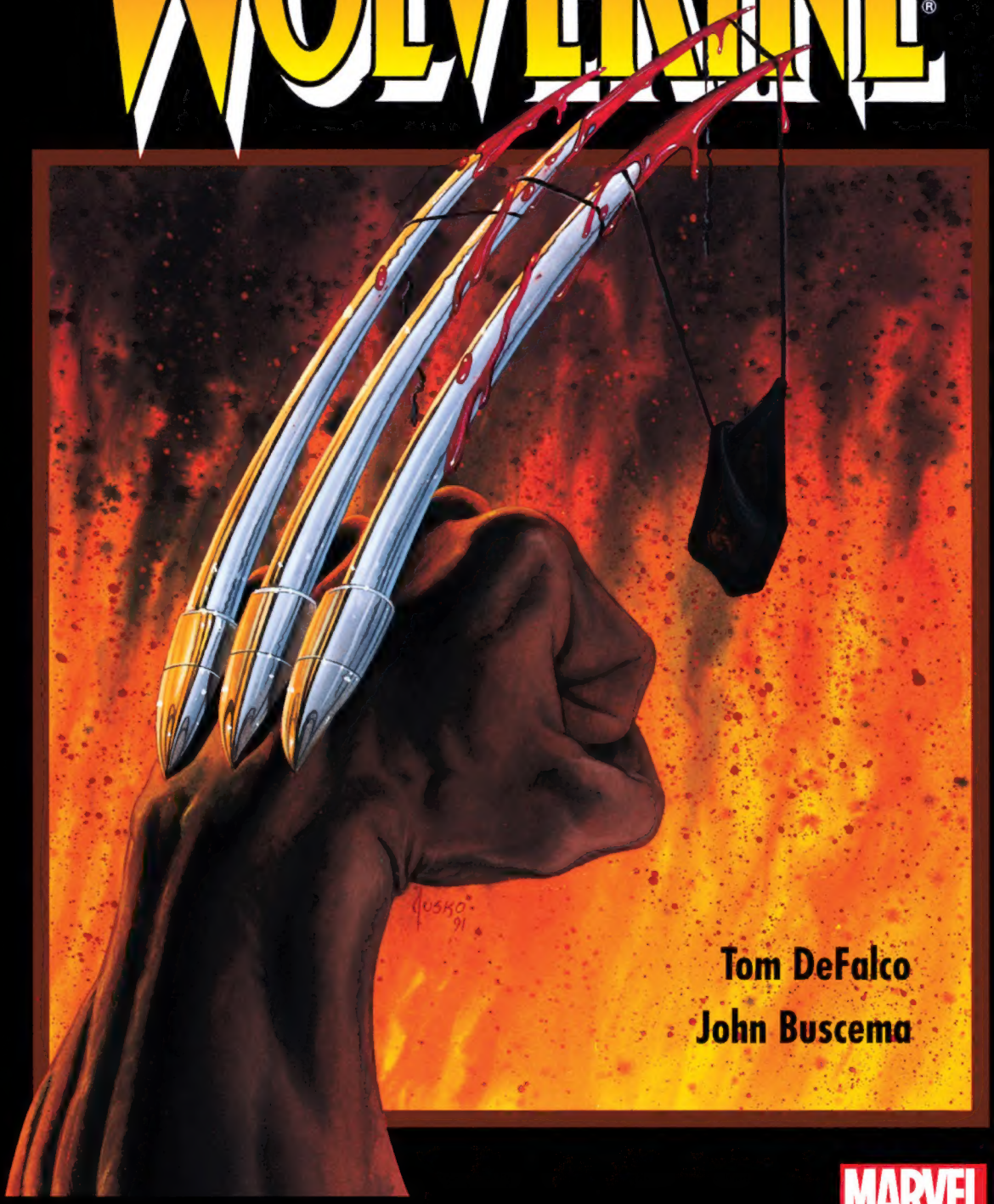
MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL

BLOODY CHOICES

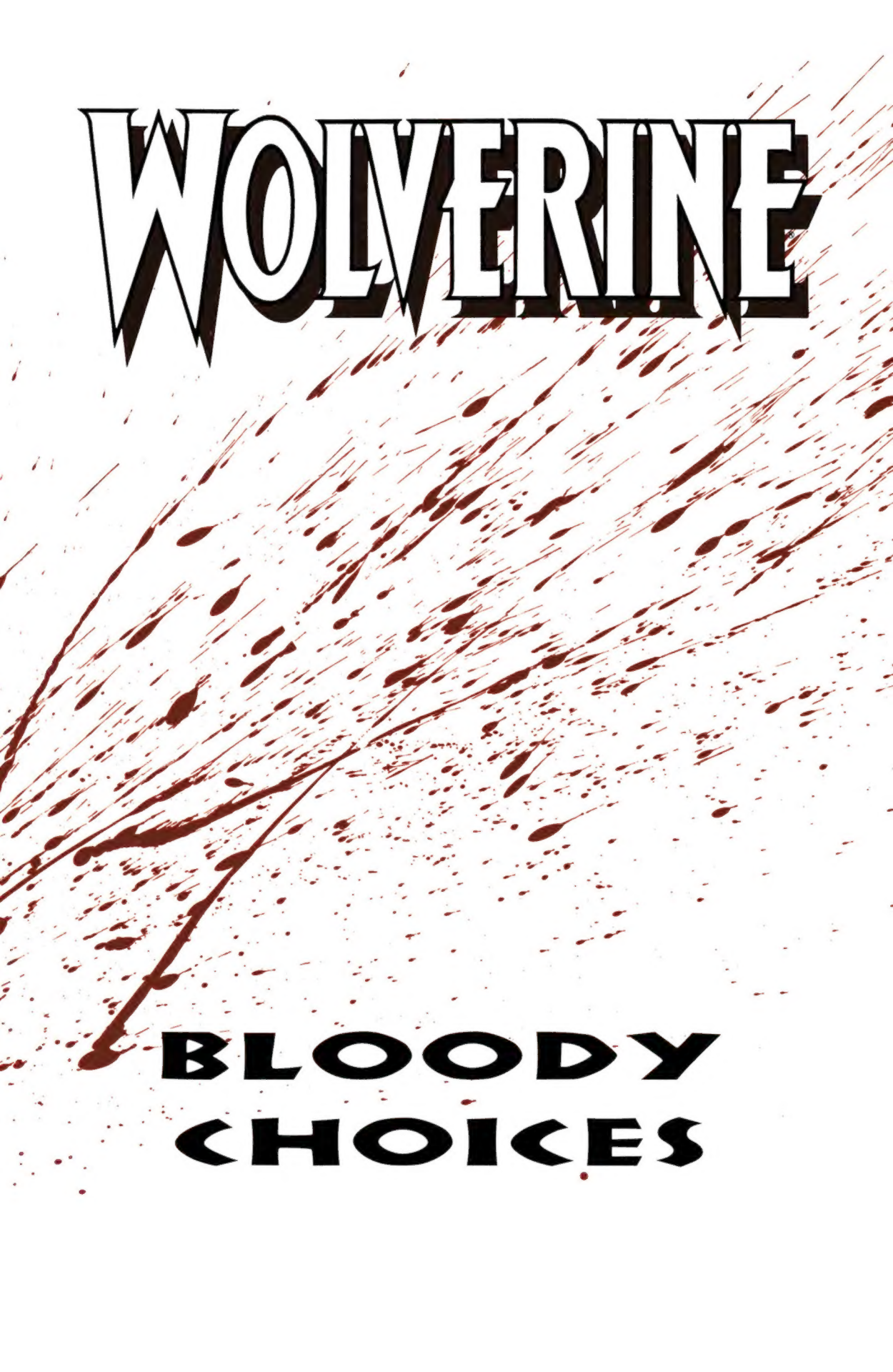
WOLVERINE®



Tom DeFalco

John Buscema

MARVEL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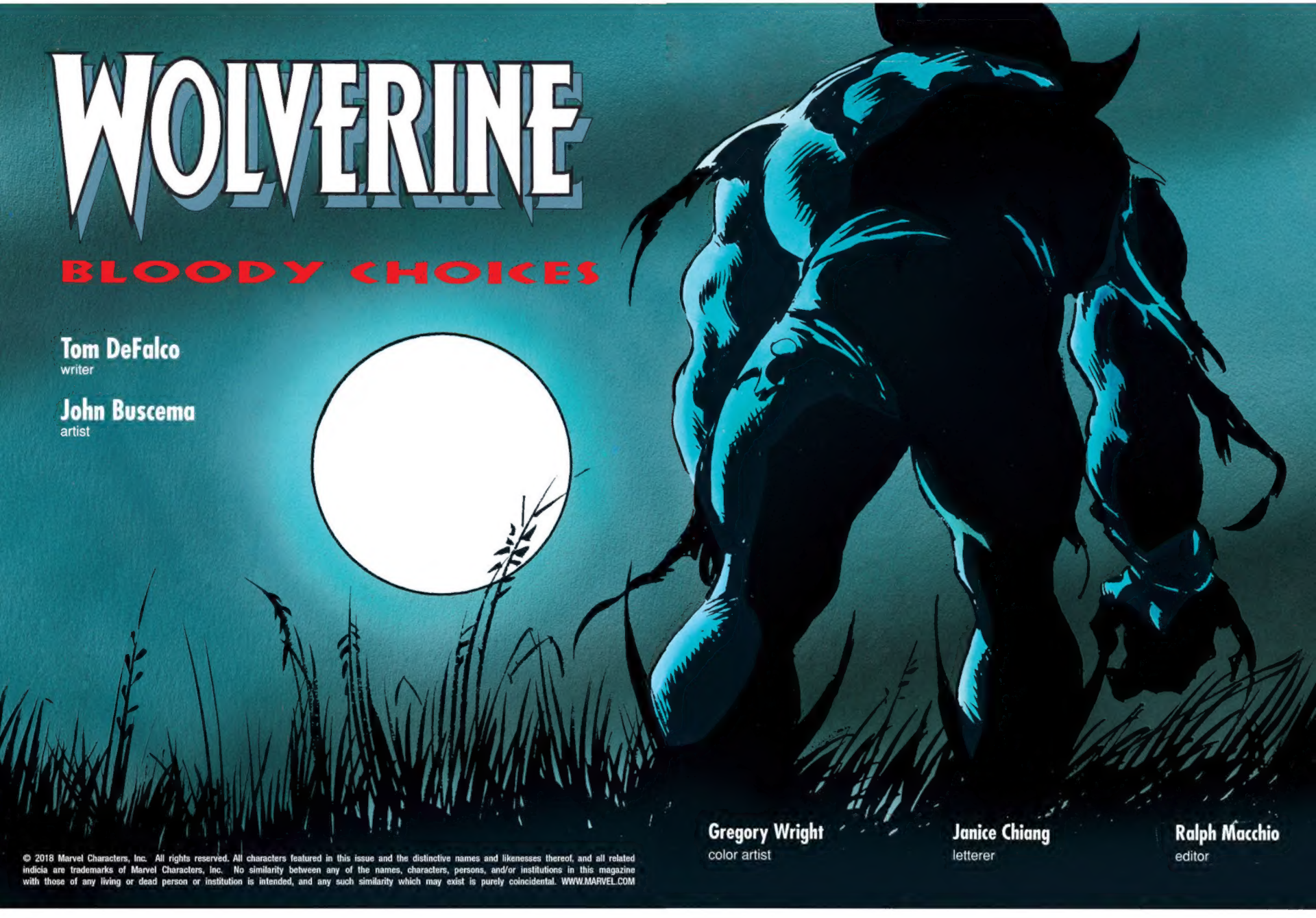

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SLICE OF LIFE

What most becomes a man? I believe it's how he deals with the duality of his very nature. Each human being has a positive, life-affirming aspect to his personality, and a negative, death-seeking part that war eternally. We're all two creatures struggling daily with our inner demons, praying they never get the better of us. We subdue our darker impulses and present only the smiling superego to society. Unfortunately, the id is not a monster happily chained and seems to grow stronger with captivity. When it's finally unleashed, we see why there is nothing we dread more than its appearance. That's why we're entranced by Wolverine. He's the beast in us all kept under tentative control.

What Tom DeFalco has shown us through BLOODY CHOICES is that even if the beast cannot be contained indefinitely, at least he can be thrust in the direction of a deserving victim. In Logan, he presents us with the potential killer–motivated by noble purposes. This is where Wolverine, that most unlikely of superheroes, displays his truly heroic side to the reader.

Of course, the artistry of veteran penciler John Buscema perfectly complements the savage subject matter. No one in comics can so masterfully add the element of elegance to violent conflict as does John.

BLOODY CHOICES will grab you by the throat and not let go until the final gut-wrenching panel. And yep, it's also got that one-eyed old warhorse Nick Fury sticking his two cents in for good measure. What more could you ask?

Enjoy.

Ralph Macchio
April 1991

KAMEHAMEHA THE GREAT UNITED THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS IN 1810.
I WONDER WHAT THE OLD BOY WOULD THINK ABOUT THE WAY THE NATIVES HONOR HIS MEMORY?
HE'D PROBABLY LIKE IT. AFTER ALL, A SUCCESSFUL KING KNOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOTTOM LINE... AND A GOOD FESTIVAL IS GOOD BUSINESS.
IT'S ALSO A DAZZLING KALEIDOSCOPE OF SIGHTS, SOUNDS AND SMELLS.
ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'RE BORN WITH HYPED UP SENSES LIKE MINE!
I'M A MAN ON HOLIDAY. TOTALLY WITHOUT A CARE IN THE WORLD.
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO BELIEVE UNTIL I'M SUDDENLY KIDNEY-PUNCHED BY A SCENT WHICH IS ALL TOO FAMILIAR, AND QUITE UNEXPECTED, CONSIDERING THE SURROUNDINGS.

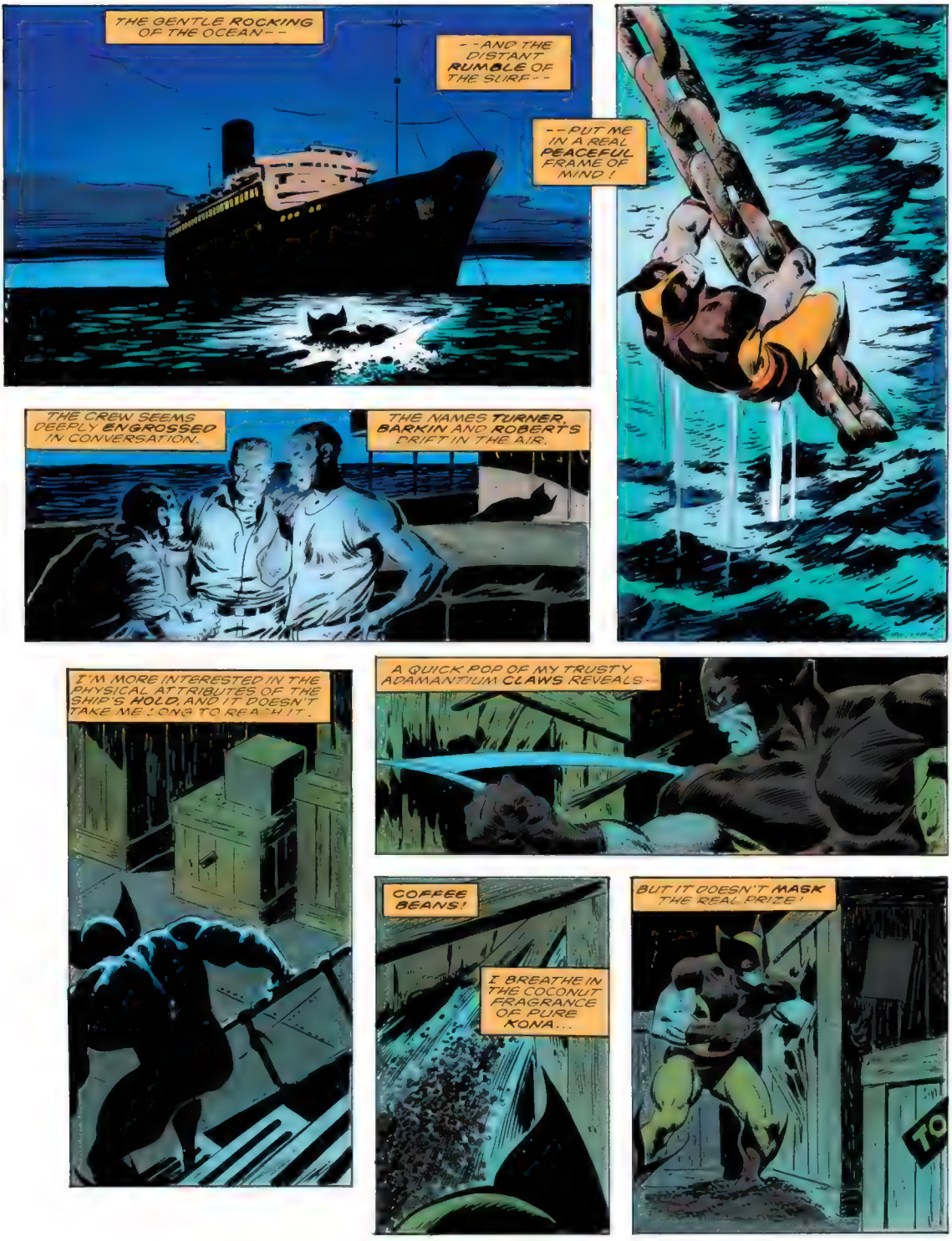
THERE'S NO MISTAKING THE SHARP, BITTER AROMA OF FEAR.
IT DOESN'T TAKE A SHERLOCK HOLMES TO SPOT THE SOURCE.
HE'S JUST A KID.
AND THE BULGE IN HIS POCKET AIN'T NO COMPUTER GAME!
IN ANY SANE WORLD, HE'D BE MUCH TOO YOUNG TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT TERROR OR GUNS!
BUT, NOBODY ACCUSES THIS WORLD OF BEING SANE!
A SMART MAN WOULD JUST MIND HIS OWN BUSINESS AND KEEP WALKING.
YEAH, RIGHT!
WITH A SLIGHT LIMP, HE HEADS STRAIGHT FOR THE OUTDOOR PATIO OF A LOCAL EATS PALACE!
IT BARELY TAKES HIM A MINUTE TO ZERO IN ON A TABLE.
THE WOLVES ARE GROWLING AT MY DOOR, MR. KAPELAND.
I TRUST THAT YOU CAN NEGOTIATE A FAVORABLE SETTLEMENT.
THAT IS MY INTENTION, MR. BULLFINCH.
HOWEVER, WE MAY BE FORCED TO FOREGO CERTAIN SHORT TERM BENEFITS IN ORDER TO ARRIVE AT AN APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENT.
EVERY INDIVIDUAL HAS A UNIQUE SCENT, AS DISTINCTIVE AS A FINGERPRINT.
SOMETHING ABOUT THAT GUY IN THE CENTER SETS SOMETHING CLAWING AT THE INSIDE OF MY BRAIN.
LIKE THE SHADOW OF SOME DISTANT MEMORY!

JUST THEN, THE WIND SHIFTS--
--AND I GET SMACKED WITH STILL ANOTHER DISTINCTIVE ODOR!
SEEMS THERE'S AN ADDITIONAL PLAYER IN THE GAME!
THAT'S WHEN THE KID MAKES HIS MOVE--!
OH, MY GOD--!
STAY COOL, MR. B.!
IT'S ONLY A LI'L FLY BUZZIN' 'ROUND THE TABLE!
CONSIDER HIM SWATTED!
FAST!
HE STRIKES WITH THE SPEED OF AN ANGRY COBRA!
ARRGH!
I BARELY MANAGE TO REACH THE KID IN TIME!
THE KNIFE RIPS THROUGH HIS ARM... INSTEAD OF HIS HEART!

GET IN THE LIMO, BOSS!
MOVE! MOVE!
WE'LL COVER YOU!
YOU SEE THE WAY THAT GUY PROVE FOR THAT KID?
HE WAS IN THE AIR BEFORE THE BULLET HIT THE TABLE!
YEAH! HE AIN'T NO SIMPLE TOURIST!
THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY CASUALTIES, BUT THE SITUATION DOWN THERE IS GETTING TOTALLY OUT OF HAND!
AIN'T NUTHIN' WE CAN DO NOW! LET THE LOCALS HANDLE IT!
I NEVER INTENDED TO SPEND THE DAY RUNNING FROM GUNFIRE!
BUT FROM THE LOOK OF THINGS--
--I'D BETTER GET USED TO IT!
CLINIC
HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THIS CHILD, LOGAN?
JUST MET 'IM, SISTER.
HIS BODY IS COVERED WITH SCARS AND WELTS!
BULLFINCH DO THIS--?
Y-YES!
T-THE MONSTER STILL HAS PALO! MY BROTHER!
NOT FOR LONG!

WELL, WELL, WHAT HAVE WE HERE?
MOST FOLKS THINK OL' DOC CORBEL RUNS HIS LITTLE CLINIC ON THE NORTHERN END OF OAHU OUTTA THE GOODNESS OF HIS HEART.
HE'S REALLY A MAJOR SLEAZEBAG, WHO DOUSES HIMSELF IN LIME-SCENTED AFTER SHAVE SO THAT HE CAN'T SMELL HIS PATIENTS..
HE ALSO MAKES A BUNDLE TREATING THOSE WHO CAN'T DEAL WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR INJURIES!
A REAL NASTY CUT, YOUNG FELLA!
THIS SHOULD HELP YOU SLEEP!
A MILLION OR SO YEARS AGO, THE DOC AND I DID A LOT OF BUSINESS TOGETHER.
I NEED YOU TO WATCH HIM FOR A FEW DAYS.
PLAYING THE WHITE KNIGHT CAN GET A MITE COSTLY, MY FRIEND!
THE DOC'S RIGHT!
THERE'S A WHOLE WORLD FULL OF PAIN AND MISERY OUT THERE!
THE PRICE IS TOO HIGH TO TRY TO HELP EVERYONE...
QUIET.
SO YOU MAKE CHOICES!
SOMETHING'S WAITING FOR ME BACK AT MY HOTEL...
MAN LEFT YOU AN ENVELOPE.
YEAH, NO BIG SURPRISE!
INSIDE'S A BRAND OF CIGAR I KNOW WELL, AND A WARNING:
A wise man keeps his nose out of other people's business!

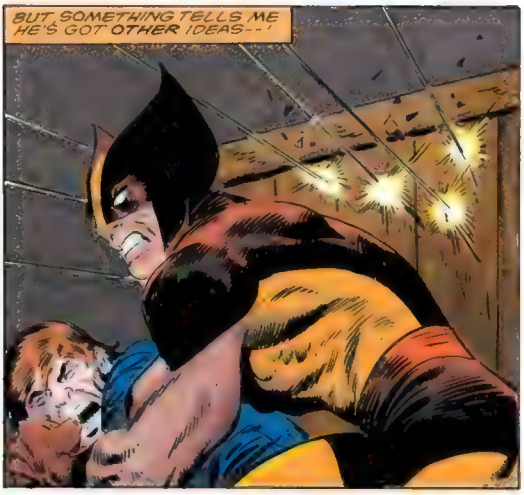
TREATING CIGAR AND WARNING WITH EXACTLY THE SAME DEFERENCE, I SET FIRE TO BOTH!
MY MIND'S FULL OF QUESTIONS, BUT THE LIBRARIES ARE CLOSED--
--SO I VISIT AN INFORMATION CENTER WHICH ISN'T LISTED IN ANY TOURIST GUIDE!
WHAT'LL IT BE?
BEER!
AND CHATTER FOR A CHASER!
WE SELL DRINKS HERE.
YEAH, AND SUPER-MARKETS SELL CANNED PEAS--
--BUT, THAT DON'T STOP 'EM FROM PUSHING TOILET PAPER!
TRUE ENOUGH!
DOESN'T LOOK LIKE YOUR FRIEND GOT YOUR MESSAGE.
NEVER THOUGHT HE WOULD!
WORD HAS IT THAT BULLFINCH OWNS A FLEET OF FREIGHTERS AND HAS INTERESTS IN A FEW OTHER BUSINESSES ON THE SIDE.
THE NIGHT IS WARM AND BALMY. I SLIP INTO SOMETHING MORE COMFORTABLE--
--AND ENJOY A MIDNIGHT SWIM.


THE GENTLE ROCKING OF THE OCEAN--
--AND THE DISTANT RUMBLE OF THE SURF--
--PUT ME IN A REAL PEACEFUL FRAME OF MIND!
THE CREW SEEMS DEEPLY ENGROSSED IN CONVERSATION.
THE NAMES TURNER, BARKIN AND ROBERTS DRIFT IN THE AIR.
I'M MORE INTERESTED IN THE PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE SHIP'S HOLD, AND IT DOESN'T TAKE ME LONG TO REACH IT.
A QUICK POP OF MY TRUSTY ADAMANTIUM CLAWS REVEALS
COFFEE BEANS!
I BREATHE IN THE COCONUT FRAGRANCE OF PURE KONA...
BUT IT DOESN'T MASK THE REAL PRIZE!
TO

COCAINE!
NICE OF Y'ALL TO JOIN US, BRO!
AH HAD ME A HUNCH YOU'D BE DROPPING BY!
AH SUPPOSE AH SHOULD GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS AND INTERROGATE Y'ALL.
BUT, WHY BOTHER WITH A HARDCASE LIKE YOU?
THE ACCENT'S ALL WRONG, BUT SOMETHING HAUNTS ME ABOUT THE SOUND OF HIS VOICE--!
HE FEELS IT, TOO!
WE... WE'VE MET BEFORE TODAY... HAVEN'T WE?
WELL, IT DON'T MATTER NONE...
WE WON'T MEET AGAIN!
KILL HIM!

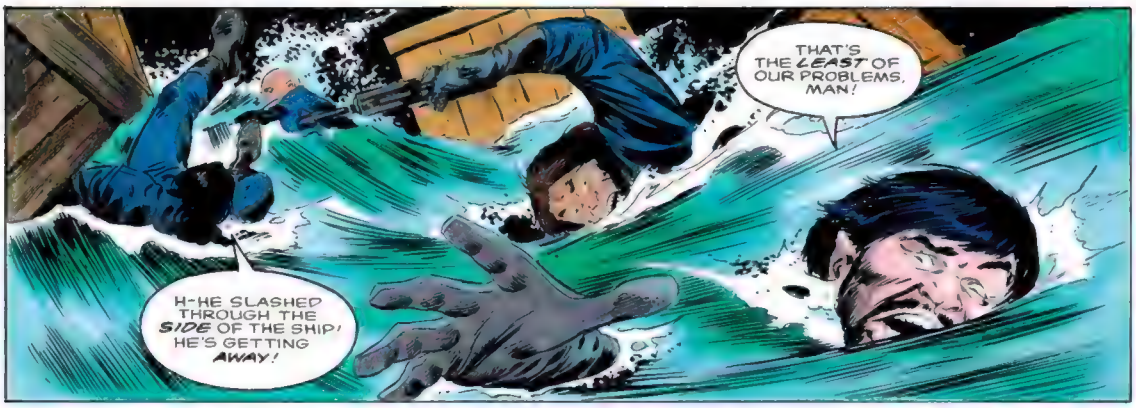
I DON'T KNOW HOW GOOD THESE GUNMEN ARE SUPPOSED TO BE!
I DON'T MUCH CARE!

I JUST WANT TO GET ACROSS THE ROOM, AND HAVE A NICE, FRIENDLY CHAT WITH THEIR LEADER.


BUT SOMETHING TELLS ME HE'S GOT OTHER IDEAS--!

AS HE TAKES HIS LEAVE, I DEBATE THE MERITS OF FOLLOWING HIM!
WHY BOTHER? I'M SURE HE'S ALREADY PREPARED FOR THAT PARTICULAR CONTINGENCY...

...BUT NOT THIS ONE!


H-HE SLASHED THROUGH THE SIDE OF THE SHIP! HE'S GETTING AWAY!
THAT'S THE LEAST OF OUR PROBLEMS, MAN!

YEAH, NOTHING LIKE A REFRESHING DIP IN THE OCEAN TO PUT EVERYTHING IN PERSPECTIVE!

THE NIGHT'S STILL WARM WHEN I REACH DRYLAND--
--BUT A CERTAIN, DISTINCTIVE ODOR HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE TROPICAL FRAGRANCES!

GOT AN EXTRA STOGIE, NICK?

YEAH, SURE!

BE MY GUEST!
YOU'RE GETTING A LITTLE OSTENTATIOUS FOR A SPY BOY, FURY... OR, DIDN'T YOU KNOW THERE'S A SHIELD EMBLEM PLASTERED ON YOUR JACKET?!

LOOK WHO'S TALKING!
YA AIN'T EXACTLY A POSTER CHILD FOR BROOKS BROTHERS, EITHER!

BESIDES, MY UNDERCOVER DAYS ARE OVER!
MY MUG'S BEEN PLASTERED ACROSS THE COVER'A NEWSWEEK MORE TIMES'N I CAN COUNT.

I GOT AS MUCH HOPE'A KEEPIN' MY IDENTITY A SECRET AS YOU DID WHEN YA USED TA DISGUISE YERSELF WITH THAT STUPID EYE PATCH.
NOW, LOOK WHO'S TALKING.
MINE'S REAL.

I WANNA KNOW YER INTEREST IN BULLFINCH.
SO MUCH FOR THE SOCIAL AMENITIES!

THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS SPRING FOR A FEW BREWS.
YOU'RE THE ONE WITH AN EXPENSE ACCOUNT.
SURE, BUT GO EASY! YA DON'T WANNA GO ADDING TA UNCLE SAMMY'S DEFICIT.

LOOKEE HERE, SQUIRREL--!
SOMEBODY MUST'A GOT LOST ON HIS WAY TO THE PINEAPPLE PARADE!

YA GOT A LOTTA BRASS COMING IN HERE DRESSED LIKE THAT, RUNT!
WHO YA SUPPOSED TO BE-- A CHEAP IMITATION OF THE BAT GUY?

THAT WAS PRETTY FUNNY, MOOSE!
WHEN YOU GONNA KILL HIM?
MOOSE--?!
NAH! I'M JUST A DARKER, GRITTIER VERSION OF THE EASTER BUNNY!
HERE'S AN EGG FOR YOU!
YOU SURE GOT A REAL FRIENDLY WAY ABOUT YA, PAL!
YEAH, IT COMES FROM DEALING WITH SCUM LIKE BULLFINCH!
THE GUY'S A CHILD MOLESTER!
YOU GOT PROOF?
ENOUGH FOR ME.
SHIELD IS ON HIM FOR USING HIS SHIPS TO MOVE PRODUCT FOR A FAR EAST DRUG CARTEL--AND WE'RE ABOUT TO SCORE A MAJOR BUST.
HE'S ABOUT TO PAY FOR HIS CRIMES... ALL OF 'EM!
I CAN GUESS HOW YA MUST FEEL, PAL...BUT I WAN'CHA TA BACK OFF FOR NOW!
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT.
THANKS FOR THE BEER
I ALMOST TRUST HIM. FURY'S ABOUT AS STRAIGHT AS THEY COME--
--BUT HE'S STILL GOVERNMENT ISSUE!

WALKING ALONG THE PIER, I KEEP SEEING THAT KID'S FACE.
SO YOUNG. AND FULL OF FEAR!
IMAGES OF ANOTHER KID FILTER IN.
A WILDBOY WHO GREW UP UNTAMED AND FEARLESS, RELYING ONLY ON HIS OWN FERAL INSTINCTS--
--SIMPLY BECAUSE HIS MUTANT BODY CONTAINED A HEALING FACTOR WHICH COULD CURE AN INJURY.
SORRY, NICK!
I OWE THIS TO THE CHILDREN!
THE TROUBLE WITH BEING KING IS THAT EVERYONE KNOWS WHERE TO FIND YOU.
SAME GOES FOR BEING THE LOCAL DRUG LORD!
BULLFINCH'S ESTATE IS BUILT LIKE A FORTRESS WITH ALL THE VERY LATEST IN HIGH-TECH LASER-DRIVEN SECURITY DEVICES.
I TRY NOT TO YAWN AS I QUICKLY SLIP PAST THEM.
I NOTICE THE PERIMETER GUARD DRAGGING HIS FEET, LOOKING LIKE A MAN IN NEED OF A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP--

--SO I ACCOMMODATE HIM!
SWEET DREAMS, BUB!
AS I NEAR THE HOUSE, TWO UNEXPECTED SCENTS SUDDENLY WHISPER TO ME.
A HINT OF LIME--
--UNDERSCORED BY THE HARSH RESIDUE OF STALE CIGAR SMOKE!
COME HERE OFTEN, SAILOR?
I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T LEAVE IT ALONE!
I PROMISED A YOUNG FRIEND THAT I'D FIND HIS BROTHER.
CAN'T IT WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE BUST? COCAINE RUINS THOUSANDS OF LIVES! LIVES WE COULD SAVE!
THE KID MAY NOT HAVE THE LUXURY OF TIME!
I'M THE ONE WHO'S WEARING THE SHIELD JACKET, SO IT'S MY CALL!
YOU CAN'T STOP ME, NICK! I'M GOING TO--
!!YEEEEE!
IT'S THE KID I RESCUED EARLIER TODAY.
THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE SAFE AND COMFY IN CORBEL'S CLINIC!

BY THE TIME I REACH HIM, HE'S PASSED BEYOND ALL PAIN... ALL FEAR.
I WASN'T MUCH HELP TO HIM!
NEVER EVEN BOTHERED TO LEARN HIS NAME.
ALL BETS ARE OFF, FURY!
MAYBE I CAN DO BETTER FOR BALO!
YEAH!
COUNT ME IN!
INTRUDERS HAVE BREACHED THE ESTATE!
TAKE THEM DOWN!
STUPID FOOLS ARE ONLY WASTING THEIR AMMUNITION--
--AND THEIR LIVES!

LOGAN LOOK OUT--!
BOGEYS ARE RUSHING YOU--FROM BEHIND!
BUT, THIS STUN GRENADE OUGHTA KEEP 'EM OFF YER TAIL!
EEYI!
W-WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!
PRAY IT'S THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES--AND NOT THE CARTEL!
WE CAN ALWAYS NEGOTIATE WITH THE GOVERNMENT!
I HAVE NO INTENTION OF DEALING FROM A POSITION OF WEAKNESS, MR. KAPELAND!
I EXPECT YOU TO PROVIDE US WITH SUFFICIENT TIME TO ESCAPE, MY FRIEND!
IF IT IS THE POLICE, I WILL PAY A SUBSTANTIAL BONUS... AS WELL AS ALL LEGAL EXPENSES!
IF IT ISN'T, YOU HAVE MY FULL AUTHORIZATION TO TAKE WHATEVER STEPS YOU DEEM NECESSARY!
AH UNDERSTAND, MR. B.!
COME, MR. KAPELAND... MY PRIVATE HELICOPTER AWAITS!
I TRY TO PREPARE FOR EVERY CONTINGENCY!
BULLFINCH!
I'M COMING FOR YOU!

HURRY UP, MR. BULLFINCH! HURRY!
WE WILL DELAY LIFT-OFF UNTIL THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT!
MY ASSOCIATE IS A MOST VALUABLE ASSET... AND I AM LOATHE TO ABANDON HIM... UNLESS I AM PERSONALLY AT RISK!

BULLFINCH--?
YAH JUST MISSED HIM, BRO!

HE'S ON THE ROOF!
YA MIGHT STILL CATCH HIM... IF YAH MOVE QUICK ENUFF!
WHAT ABOUT YOU?

LIL' OL' ME?
WELL, BRO, I COULD BE A SERIOUS PROBLEM!

I SEE HIM TENSE FOR A LUNGE... AND TRY TO CONVINCE MYSELF THAT I COULD HAVE EASILY DODGED IT!
I DELIBERATELY TAKE HIS FIRST TWO PUNCHES!
IT'S A PLOY TO GAUGE HIS STRENGTH, AND ASSESS HIS BATTLE PROWESS!

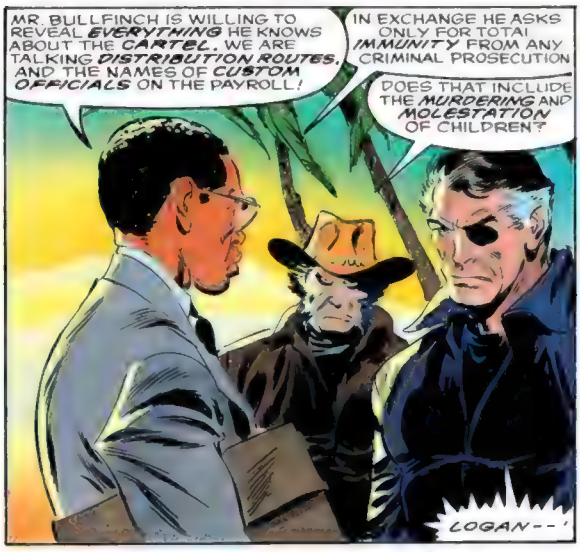
UNFORTUNATELY, HE TAPS ME WITH ALL THE GENTLENESS OF A PILEDRIVER--
--AND I HAVE NO CHOICE ABOUT AVOIDING THE THIRD!

YAH'RE A DISAPPOINTMENT, BRO.
AH THOUGHT YAH'D BE A MITE TOUGHER.
I AM!
:UFFF:-
UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL, I CAN NO LONGER IGNORE THE HAUNTING FAMILIARITY OF HIS SCENT!
IT DRILLS INTO MY HEAD LIKE A SPIKE!
EVOKING HALF-FORMED MEMORIES, AND DEMANDING FEARFUL ANSWERS!
WHO ARE YOU?
WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?!
IT'S... SHIV!
SHIV!!
AN' I BET YAH CAN GUESS WHY!
CARELESS!
HE LEFT ME SCRAMBLING IN THE DIRT LIKE A ROOKIE CHASING AFTER HIS FIRST CURVE IN THE MAJORS!

I AM SO PLEASED THAT YOU COULD JOIN US, MR. SHIV!
I TRUST THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY ELIMINATED THE CAUSE OF OUR CURRENT STRESSFUL SITUATION.
AH DO BELIEVE SO!
THE BIG FISH APPARENTLY ESCAPED BY HELICOPTER, SIR!
WHAT CHARGES DO YOU WISH TO LEVEL AGAINST THESE CITIZENS?
WE'LL START WITH ACCESSORY TO MURDER!
LOOKS LIKE MY BUST HAS GONE SOUR!
HOW YOU DOING? GONNA LIVE?
PROBABLY!
SEE? I CAN'T BUY A BREAK!
AT LEAST YOU'LL BE OUT FOR THE DURATION!
THAT'S BOGUS, MAN! WE'LL MAKE BAIL BY MORNING!
MAYBE SO, FRIEND, BUT IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG NIGHT!
YEAH... RIGHT!
I CAN FEEL FURY'S EYES BORING INTO ME AS THEY LOAD ME INTO THE AWAITING AMBULANCE.
HE SHOULD KNOW BETTER!
FURY KILLS THE NEXT FEW HOURS DOING WHATEVER LAWMEN DO AT CRIME SCENES.
ME, I JUST SIT BACK.
--AND LET MY MUTANT HEALING FACTOR DO ITS THING!
WHAT THE--?!
CLIMB ABOARD, PARTNER!
IN CASE YOU DIDN'T REALIZE IT, WE'RE WORKING THIS CASE TOGETHER!

AFTER UNLEASHING A FEW THOUSAND RATHER COLORFUL EXPLETIVES, FURY FINALLY ACCEPTS THE INEVITABLE, AND INVITES ME TO THE LOCAL SHIELD HANGOUT.
THE ADVANTAGE OF WORKING WITH A WORLDWIDE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY LIKE SHIELD IS THAT YOU GET ACCESS TO EVERY PIECE OF SOPHISTICATED HARDWARE KNOWN TO MAN... AND PLENTY OF UNKNOWN ONES AS WELL
NUTHING!
ALL THIS FANCY JUNK, AND WE'RE TURNIN' JACK ON BULLFINCH AND HIS 'COPTER!
FIGURES!
OKAY, WISE MOUTH! YOU GOT A SUGGESTION ON HOW WE SHOULD GO ABOUT TRACKIN' 'IM DOWN?
I USUALLY RELY ON INSTINCT, INTELLIGENCE AND PLAIN OLD PERSEVERANCE!
THAT'S REAL HELPFUL! MAYBE I OUGHTA GET SOME COMPUTER JOCKEY TO TRY 'N PROGRAM THAT INTO THESE BABIES, AND--
RRRRRING
RRRRRRING
YEAH--?
YA DON'T SAY!
LOOKS LIKE YOUR PERSEVERANCE PAID OFF!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THAT WAS KAPELAND. THE LAWYER.
BULLFINCH WANTS TO MAKE A DEAL!

HOW DO YOU PLAN TO PLAY IT?
I DUNNO! DEPENDS ON WHAT HE WANTS.
WHAT'S THE MATTER? DON'T YA TRUST ME?
SURE! ABOUT AS MUCH AS YOU TRUST ME!


MR. BULLFINCH IS WILLING TO REVEAL EVERYTHING HE KNOWS ABOUT THE CARTEL. WE ARE TALKING DISTRIBUTION ROUTES, AND THE NAMES OF CUSTOM OFFICIALS ON THE PAYROLL!
IN EXCHANGE HE ASKS ONLY FOR TOTAL IMMUNITY FROM ANY CRIMINAL PROSECUTION
DOES THAT INCLUDE THE MURDERING AND MOLESTATION OF CHILDREN?
LOGAN---!

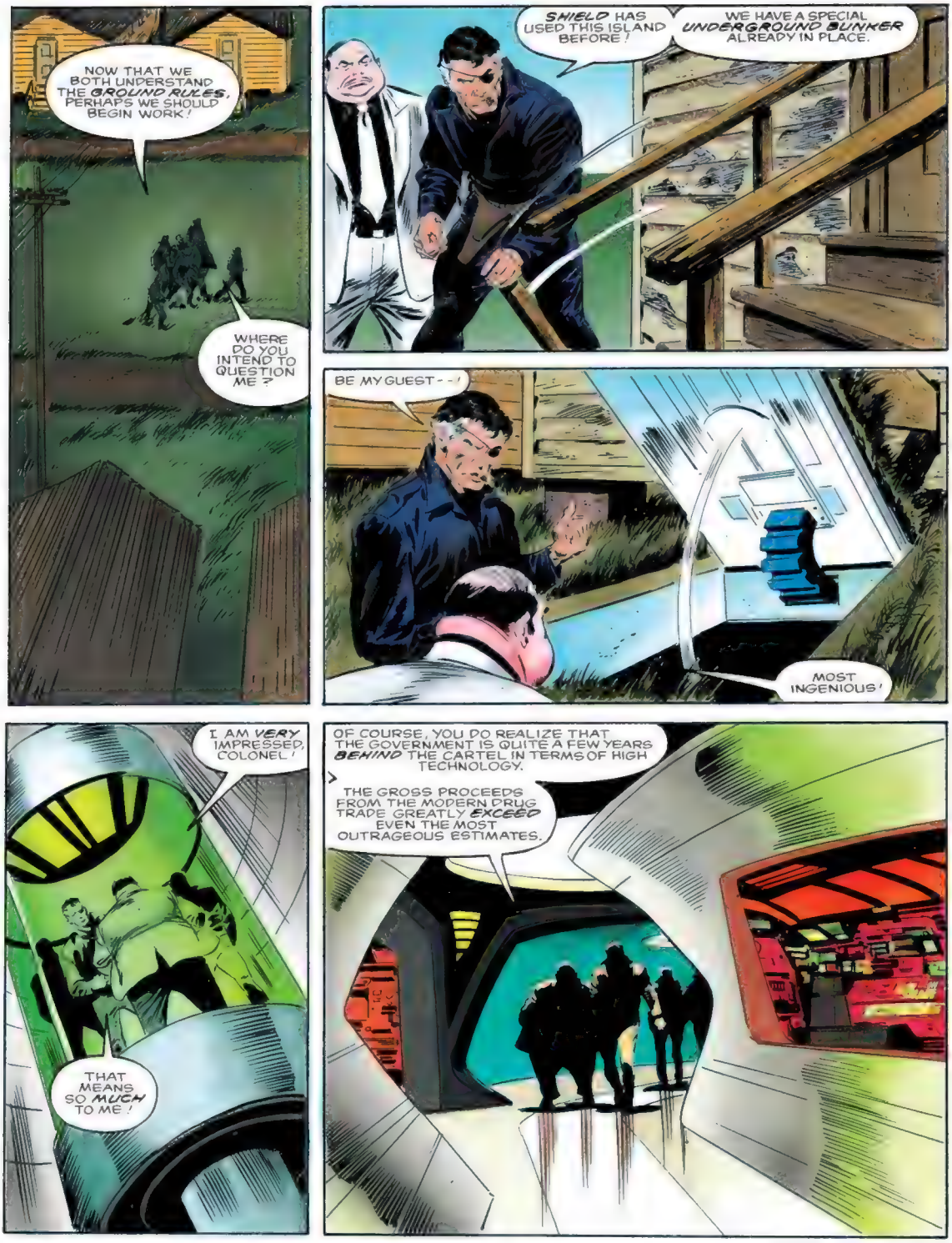
COLONEL FURY, I MUST ASK IF YOUR ASSOCIATE IS HERE IN ANY OFFICIAL CAPACITY--?
NO. HE'S MERELY AN INTERESTED OBSERVER.
THEN, I STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT HE REFRAIN FROM ANY FURTHER COMMENT.

YOU CAN'T AGREE TO THIS DEAL, NICK!
YOU CAN'T LET BULLFINCH WALK AFTER WHAT HE'S DONE!
I'VE GOT TO CONSIDER THE LARGER PICTURE!

THE CARTEL IS KILLING KIDS BY THE THOUSANDS! THE DRUGS THEY SUPPLY ARE HELPING TO DESTROY THE VERY FOUNDATION OF OUR COUNTRY!
I REALLY DON'T HAVE A CHOICE HERE!
THAT'S PURE BULL!

YOU ALWAYS HAVE A CHOICE!
YOU JUST DON'T HAVE THE GUTS TO MAKE THE RIGHT ONE!
NO TRESPASSING US GOVT
THIS ENTIRE ISLAND SERVED AS A JAPANESE INTERMENT CENTER DURING WORLD WAR II!
THAT WAS ONE OF THE MOST SHAMEFUL EPISODES IN THE HISTORY OF OUR GOVERNMENT.
IT ONLY SEEMS APPROPRIATE THAT THEY STASH BULLFINCH HERE!
WHAT'S THAT CRACK SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
WE'VE HEARD ALL THE RUMORS, COLONEL!
I'VE GOT THREE KIDS AT HOME, AND I THINK CASTRATION'S TOO GOOD FOR SCUM LIKE HIM!
KEEP YER OPINIONS TO YERSELF, SONNY! I DON'T CARE HOW YA FEEL ABOUT HIM PERSONALLY!
JUST DO YER JOB, AND HELP ME PROTECT HIM!
THAT CLEAR--?
YES, SIR!

MR. KAPELAND HAS ALREADY RECEIVED THE NECESSARY PAPERWORK, AND INFORMS ME THAT YOU HAVE THE BLESSING OF YOUR SUPERIORS.
YEAH! THE DEAL'S GOING DOWN EXACTLY LIKE YOU SAID!
THERE'S JUST ONE MORE STIPULATION, COLONEL--
I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR PERSONAL ASSURANCE--YOUR WORD AS A GENTLEMAN--THAT YOU WILL GUARANTEE MY SAFETY AS LONG AS I AM IN YOUR CUSTODY.
THAT GOES WITHOUT SAYING, BULLFINCH.
PERHAPS, BUT I SINCERELY DO WISH YOU WOULD SAY IT!
ALL RIGHT... I PROMISE!
EXCELLENT!
I WOULD LIKE TO VIEW MY ACCOMODATIONS NOW.
HARDLY THE PLAZA... BUT I EXPECTED AS MUCH.
HERE YA GO--!
I HOPE IT MEETS WITH YOUR APPROVAL.
MR. KAPELAND WILL ARRANGE FOR A FEW AMENITIES TO MAKE MY STAY MORE BEARABLE.
COLONEL, I UNDERSTAND WHY A MAN IN YOUR POSITION WOULD FEEL IT NECESSARY TO ATTEMPT TO HUMILIATE ME.
DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME!
I AM NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR APPROVAL... JUST YOUR PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE!


NOW THAT WE BOTH UNDERSTAND THE GROUND RULES, PERHAPS WE SHOULD BEGIN WORK!
WHERE DO YOU INTEND TO QUESTION ME?
SHIELD HAS USED THIS ISLAND BEFORE!
WE HAVE A SPECIAL UNDERGROUND BUNKER ALREADY IN PLACE.
BE MY GUEST--!
MOST INGENIOUS!
I AM VERY IMPRESSED, COLONEL!
THAT MEANS SO MUCH TO ME!
OF COURSE, YOU DO REALIZE THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS QUITE A FEW YEARS BEHIND THE CARTEL IN TERMS OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY.
THE GROSS PROCEEDS FROM THE MODERN DRUG TRADE GREATLY EXCEED EVEN THE MOST OUTRAGEOUS ESTIMATES.

IF BUSINESS IS SO GOOD, WHY ARE YOU QUITTING?
STRESS! THE CONSTANT PRESSURES WERE BEGINNING TO WEAR ON ME.
I HAVE ALREADY AMASSED A CONSIDERABLE FORTUNE, AND MERELY WISH TO ENJOY IT.
I AM A MAN OF EXTRAVAGANT PLEASURES.
HOW'S THE CARTEL GOING TO REACT TO YOUR RETIREMENT?
THEY'LL BE ANNOYED AT FIRST, BUT I AM FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT THEY WON'T DO ANYTHING RECKLESS

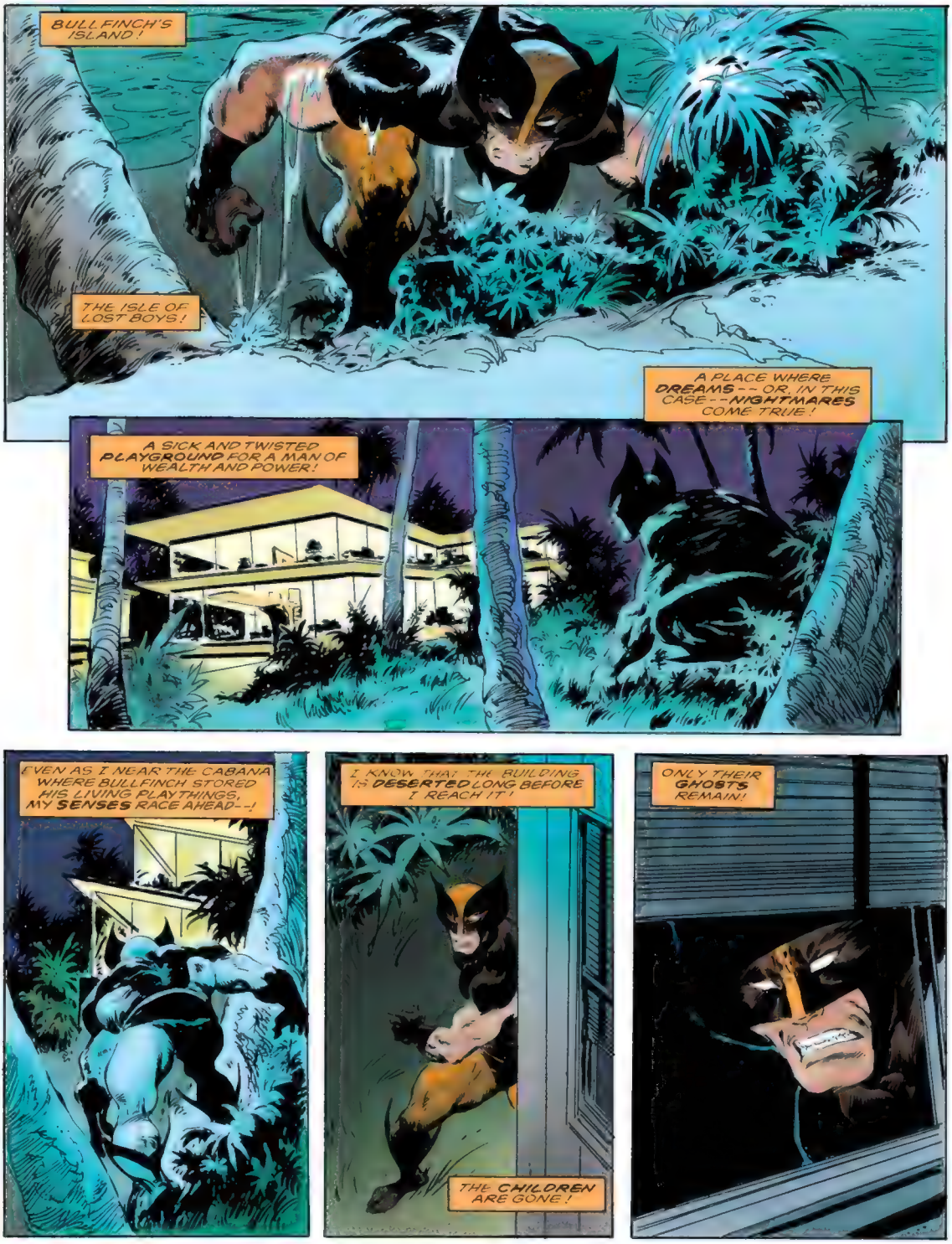
WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT PETTY THUGS BENT ON REVENGE. THE CARTEL IS COMPOSED OF HIGHLY EDUCATED, RESPONSIBLE BUSINESSMEN.
THEIR ONLY INTEREST IS THE BOTTOM LINE.

THEY ARE FULLY COGNIZANT OF THE KIND OF SECURITY THAT I CAN PROVIDE FOR MYSELF.
REVENGE JUST WOULDN'T BE COST-EFFECTIVE IN MY CASE.
IT WOULDN'T BE GOOD BUSINESS.

WHILE FURY WAS BUSY PLAYING FOOTSIE WITH THE SLIMEBALL, I DROPPED IN ON AN OLD FRIEND...
SHAVE LOTION
GOING SOMEWHERE, DOC?
WE HAD A DEAL, CORBEL.
TAKE IT EASY, YOUNG FELLA!
DON'T DO ANYTHING HASTY.
WE CAN WORK THIS OUT, AND--
FORGET IT, DOC! YOU ALREADY PLAYED ME FOR A FOOL ONCE! DON'T TRY IT A SECOND TIME!
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO SAFEGUARD THE KID FOR ME!
HOW DID HE END UP WITH BULLFINCH?!
I... DON'T KNOW!
SURE, YOU DO...
I RECOGNIZED YOUR AFTER-SHAVE!
WHY DID YOU DELIVER HIM TO THAT MONSTER, DOC?

WHY..?
BULLFINCH AND I HAD AN ARRANGEMENT!
I... HELPED TO SUPPLY HIM.
H-HE SUPPLIED OTHER ENTHUSIASTS.
YOU FILTHY DISGUSTING PIECE OF--
WAIT! DON'T KILL ME!
I... I HAVE SOMETHING TO TRADE FOR MY LIFE!
WHAT COULD YOU POSSIBLY HAVE THAT I'D WANT?
YOU'RE AFTER THE KID'S BROTHER... PALO!
I... KNOW WHERE BULLFINCH USED TO STOCKPILE HIS MERCHANDISE!
I CAN ALMOST HEAR FURY LAUGHING AS I CHOKE OUT MY RESPONSE...
TALK!

IF I WERE A PHILOSOPHER, I WOULD WONDER HOW THE END COULD EVER JUSTIFY THE MEANS . . . IF YOU ARE ALWAYS FORCED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN TWO EVILS?
BUT, I'M JUST A SIMPLE MAN. .
. . ONE WHO IMMEDIATELY SENSES MOVEMENT IN THE SHADOWS.
SEEMS LIKE I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WITH A GRUDGE AGAINST THE GOOD DOCTOR.
THEY COULD BE FROM BULLFINCH OR THE CARTEL.
IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER.
A SMART MAN WOULD JUST MIND HIS OWN BUSINESS AND KEEP WALKING.
SO WOULD A SIMPLE ONE.
SOME CHOICES ARE DOWNRIGHT EASY TO MAKE!
"HE MOON HAS NOT FULLY ABANDONED ITS ETERNAL STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ENCROACHING DAWN BY THE TIME I REACH THE ISLAND.
DOES IT CONSCIOUSLY CHOOSE TO RETREAT BEFORE THE START OF DAY?
OR, IS IT MERELY A CREATURE OF INSTINCT?
A PUPPET DIRECTED BY SUBCONSCIOUS, PRIMAL URGES?
I WISH I KNEW.
THEN, AGAIN, MAYBE IT'S BETTER THAT I DON'T.


BULLFINCH'S ISLAND!
THE ISLE OF LOST BOYS!
A PLACE WHERE DREAMS--OR, IN THIS CASE--NIGHTMARES COME TRUE!
A SICK AND TWISTED PLAYGROUND FOR A MAN OF WEALTH AND POWER!
EVEN AS I NEAR THE CABANA WHERE BULLFINCH STORED HIS LIVING PLAYTHINGS, MY SENSES RACE AHEAD--!
I KNOW THAT THE BUILDING IS DESERTED LONG BEFORE I REACH IT!
THE CHILDREN ARE GONE!
ONLY THEIR GHOSTS REMAIN!

AND, YET, IN MY MIND'S EYE, I SEE THEM ALL!
SHOULDERS HUNCHED! FACES HAUNTED!
PERMANENTLY WRAPPED IN A FEAR SO TIGHT THAT EVERY BREATH REQUIRES A MAJOR EFFORT!
A DARK, BESTIAL HUNGER SUDDENLY FLARES FROM DEEP WITHIN ME!
THEY MUST BE AVENGED!
THEY WILL BE AVENGED.
WELL, WELL, WHAT HAVE WE HERE--?!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, FANCY PANTS?
DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY--?
NO.
JUST SOMETHING TO DO--!

INCREDIBLE!
THIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN ONLY A HOBBY TO MR. BULLFINCH, BUT IT ALSO GENERATED A SIGNIFICANT SHARE OF REVENUE!
YAH SEEM A MIGHT TAKEN WITH ALL'A THESE HEAH RECORDS.
I AM GLAD YOU BROUGHT IT UP, MR. SHIV. IT'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN MEANING TO DISCUSS WITH YOU.

AS YOU KNOW, MR. BULLFINCH FULLY INTENDS TO DIVEST HIMSELF OF ALL PARA-LEGITIMATE ENTERPRISES.
A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY THEREFORE EXISTS FOR OTHER ENTERPRISING ENTREPRENEURS.

AH HAD ME A HUNCH THAT YORE MIND WAS TRACKIN' IN THAT GENERAL DIRECTION.
A MAN WITH YOUR PARTICULAR EXPERTISE WOULD CERTAINLY BE IN A POSITION TO NEGOTIATE A VERY ATTRACTIVE BENEFITS PACKAGE.
KEEP ON TALKING, MR. KAPELAND. AH LIKE THAT WAY YAH'RE HEADING...

EEYAH!
OH, MY GOD--?!
W-WHAT WOULD POSSESS ANY MAN TO SCREAM LIKE THAT?
W-WHAT COULD CAUSE SUCH TOTAL TERRORT!
A GHOST! A GHOST...WITH CLAWS!

MAKE TRACKS, MR. K.!
WE'LL CONTINUE THIS HEAH CONVERSATION LATER!
I... I'LL BE WITH BULLFINCH.
I JUST HAVE ONE LAST DELIVERY TO MAKE!
GOOD LUCK, MR SHIV!

DON'T NEED NO LUCK!
AH GOT SKILL!!

SURPRISED TO SEE ME, SHIV?!

NOT AT ALL, BRO!
AH FIGURED YA FOR A FAST HEALER!
SO AM AH!
THERE'S MORE THAN A PASSIN' SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE TWO'A US! WHY, WE COULD ALMOST BE--
DON'T SAY IT!
DON'T EVEN THINK IT!
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE!
I DON'T CARE!
YOU DIDN'T EXIST FOR ME, BEFORE THIS ALL STARTED!
AND, YOU WON'T WHEN IT'S OVER!
THAT'S FINE WITH ME, BRO--

BY THE TIME, AH'M FINISHED HEAH--
--NUTHING'S GONNA EXIST FOR YA!
YAH HEAR ME--?!
NUTHING!!
HE COULD HAVE AIMED FOR MY HEART.
HE DIDN'T!
MAYBE I COULD HAVE LEAPED AWAY!
MAYBE I COULD HAVE PREVENTED HIM FROM TOSSING ME AWAY LIKE AN UNWANTED MEMORY!
BUT, MAYBE I JUST WANTED TO SEE HIS NEXT MOVE!
THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH LIFE... TOO MANY MAYBES!

THIS IS HIS CHANCE TO ESCAPE!
TO BE FREE OF ME, AND THE WHOLE SORDID AFFAIR!
BUT, EVEN AS I AWAIT HIS DECISION, I INTUITIVELY KNOW THE COURSE HE'LL TAKE!
THE ONLY ONE POSSIBLE TO A MAN LIKE HIM!
I'LL KILL YOU!!
I SWEAR I WILL!!
AND IN THAT INSTANT MY HEART SCREAMS THE TRUTH!
THE ANIMAL INSTINCT WHICH HAS GUIDED ME THROUGH ALL MY DAYS RIPS AWAY THE LIE!
WE ARE NOT BROTHERS!
WE NEVER WERE!
ARMED WITH THIS KNOWLEDGE, I SPRING TO MEET HIS ATTACK--!
WE ARE MERELY TWO MEN WHO SHARE CERTAIN PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS-- AND A SIMILARITY OF LIFESTYLE!
THE HALF-FORMED MEMORIES HE EVOKED WERE MERELY THE MAYBES-- THE POSSIBILITIES-- THE PATHS THAT OTHER, HARSHER CHOICES MIGHT HAVE TAKEN MY LIFE!

OUR SPEED AND STAMINA MAY BE COMPARABLE!
OUR STRENGTH AND PROWESS IDENTICAL!
THAT IS THE ONLY KINSHIP WE SHARE!
THE ONLY TRUE BOND WE WILL EVER KNOW!
FIGHTING HIM IS LIKE BATTLING A DARKER VERSION OF MYSELF--
--BUT, I HAVE OFTEN GONE DOWN THIS PARTICULAR ROAD!
A FOUL AND TWISTED THING LIES BENEATH MY SURFACE!
A PRIMAL BEAST WHO INCESSANTLY BEGS FOR RELEASE--!
A MINDLESS BERSERKER WHO REVELS IN FURY--
--AND LUSTS FOR BLOOD!
THE STRUGGLE TO CONTROL ITS DARK DESIRES--TO DOMINATE THE DEMON WITHIN--IS A NEVER ENDING WAR!

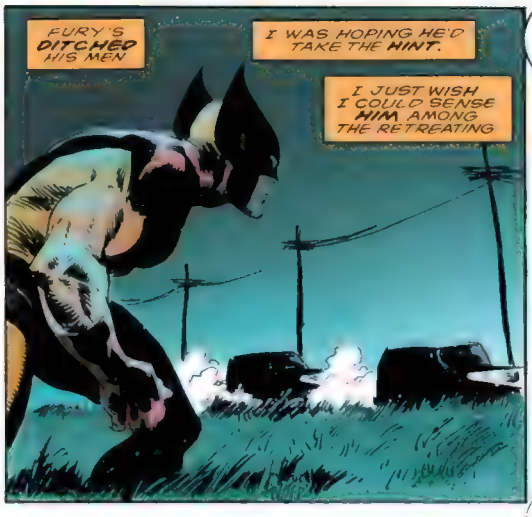
A WAR THAT I AM DEDICATED TO WIN!
ALAS, POOR SHIV...HE WAS ONLY A MOMENTARY DISTRACTION IN MY OWN UNENDING STRUGGLE!
HE CLAIMED TO BE A FAST HEALER.
I HOPE THAT'S TRUE... FOR HIS SAKE!
I SUPPOSE I COULD JUST LET HIM DROWN...
...BUT THAT'S NOT AN OPTION I'M PREPARED TO TAKE!
T-THANKS, BRO!
STOP CALLING ME THAT!
YESSIR... YAH THE BOSS!
W-WE CAN MAKE A DEAL! Y-YAH JESS CUT ME LOOSE NOW!
AH...GOT SUMTHIN' YAH WANT!
WHAT--?
B-BULLFINCH!
AN' PALO!

ANOTHER CHOICE!
ANOTHER BLOODY CHOICE!
HEADS UP, PEOPLE!
WE GOT COMPANY!
THAT'S BULLFINCH'S LAWYER, SIR!
THE COMMAND CENTER HAS ALREADY CLEARED HIM FOR LANDING!
THAT MAY BE SO, SERGEANT... BUT WE'RE GOING TO DO THIS BY THE BOOK! SEARCH NIM AND ALL OF HIS GOODS!
I DON'T WANT TO RISK A FOUL-UP!
...BUT, I THOUGHT THIS GUY STEWART WAS IN CHARGE OF THAT OPERATION!
TOTAL AUTONOMY IS MERELY A MYTH OF THE LOWER CLASSES, COLONEL. EVERYONE REPORTS TO SOMEONE.
YOU...DON'T LIKE ME VERY MUCH, DO YOU?
FRANKLY, I'D RATHER SWIM IN MY OWN PUKE THAN SIT HERE WITH YOU!
CRUDE, BUT TO THE POINT!
A MAN WITH MY SOPHISTICATED ENTHUSIASMS IS WELL ACCUSTOMED TO VULGARITIES FROM PEOPLE OF YOUR SORT.
COLONEL--!
TOPSIDE SECURITY REPORTS A MAJOR VIOLATION IN PROTOCOL! THEY'RE REAL UPSET, SIR!
SPILL IT OUT, MAN! WHAT'S GOING ON UP THERE?
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, I THINK YOU'D BETTER GO SEE FOR YOURSELF!

ALL RIGHT, I WANT ANSWERS! NOW!
WHAT IS THIS--?!
I ASSUMED THAT I HAD YOUR IMPLIED BLESSING COLONEL FURY.
THE MEN ARE FURIOUS! WE DIDN'T SIGN UP TO BABYSIT NO SICK-O PERVERT!
WHAT'S THAT KID DOING HERE, KAPELAND?
WHEN MR. BULLFINCH ASKED ME TO OBTAIN CERTAIN AMENITIES FOR HIM, I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF ARRANGING FOR SUITABLE COMPANIONSHIP.
THIS YOUNG GENTLEMAN IS HIS... NEPHEW!
IS THERE A PROBLEM, COLONEL?
YER DAMNED RIGHT THERE'S A PROBLEM!
A HELL OF A PROBLEM!
COLONEL, CALM DOWN--!
DON'T TAKE IT PERSONAL, SIR!
I'VE HAD ALL I CAN STOMACH FROM THIS OVERWEIGHT, OILY PIECE OF CRAP!
TRY TO RESTRAIN YOURSELF, FURY.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A PROFESSIONAL.

MR. KAPELAND MAY HAVE FOOLISHLY STEPPED BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF GOOD TASTE, BUT THIS CHANGES NOTHING.
DON'T PLAY THE SHOCKED BOY SCOUT WITH ME, FURY. YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WERE DEALING WITH!
YOU ARE STILL OBLIGATED TO PROTECT ME.
COLONEL--! THE GROUND SECURITY PERIMETER HAS BEEN BREACHED!
MOTION SENSORS REPORT A LONE OPERATIVE!
A LONE--?!
LISTEN UP, PEOPLE--! THERE'S BEEN A SLIGHT CHANGE IN PLANS!
YOU'RE PULLING OUT!
YOU ARE TO EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY!
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS, SIR!
THIS AIN'T NO DEBATE, BUDDY!
BULLFINCH AND KAPELAND STAY WITH ME! THE REST'A YOU--CLEAR OUT!!
GET MOVING! GO! GO!
I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, FURY!
GOOD LUCK, SIR!
YEAH... ME, TOO!
YOU GO ALONG WITH THE OTHERS, KID. THEY'LL TAKE GOOD CARE'A YA! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
P-PALO!
EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE OKAY, PALO! YOU AIN'T GOT NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!

JUDGMENT DAY, BULLFINCH!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE GONE THROUGH IN LIFE BEFORE NOW--
--BUT THE WORST HAS BEEN PARADISE COMPARED TO ME!
I SWEAR THAT YOU HAVE NEVER SEEN TRUE HELL YET--
--BUT IT'S COMING!


FURY'S DITCHED HIS MEN
I WAS HOPING HE'D TAKE THE HINT.
I JUST WISH I COULD SENSE HIM AMONG THE RETREATING

HE MUST'A FIGURED THAT I WOULDN'T SACRIFICE 'EM FOR A SLEAZEBAG LIKE YOU!
Y-YOU PROMISED TO PROTECT ME!
C-CAN YOU STOP HIM--?!

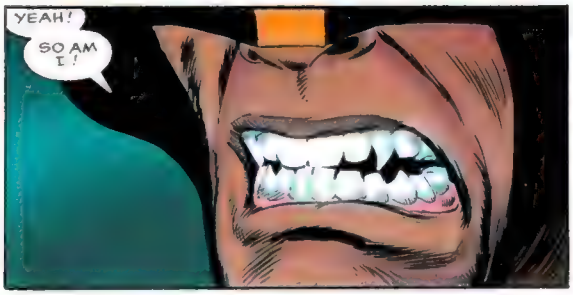
NO GUARANTEE!
I'LL GIVE YA MY BEST SHOT!
THAT'S USUALLY ENUFF!

HAVE YOU GONE MAD, COLONEL? HAVE YOU TOTALLY LOST YOUR MIND?
YOU CAN'T MOUNT AN ADEQUATE DEFENSE WITHOUT SUFFICIENT MEN!
THAT ANIMAL IS COMING--! THE ONE WHICH HAS BEEN STALKING ME!
T- THE ONE WITH THE CLAWS--?
YEAH!
HE DELIBERATELY SET OFF THEM MOTION SENSORS TA SAVE LIVES!
THE INNOCENT LIVES OF MY MEN!

HI, NICK!
I WAS HOPING YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE!
I AIN'T EXACTLY SPINNIN' CARTWHEELS AT THE SIGHT 'A YER UGLY MUG, EITHER!

IT'S OVER, LOGAN! I FOUND PALO FOR YA!
HE'S ALREADY ON HIS WAY TO A HOSPITAL ON THE BIG ISLAND!
HE'S SAFE!
GLAD TO HEAR IT, NICK!
BUT, THERE'S STILL SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS!

I'M REAL SORRY YOU FEEL THAT WAY!


YEAH!
SO AM I!

FURY IS TOO MUCH THE PRO TO GIVE ANYTHING AWAY!
ONE MOMENT, HIS EYES ARE BEGGING ME TO BACK OFF--!
AND, IN VERY THE NEXT, THE BENT FINGERS ARE FLASHING TOWARD MY JUGULAR--!
SWEET!

I ROLL WITH THE JAB--
--PULLING MYSELF OUT OF RANGE!
OUT OF TEMPTATION!
LAST WARNING, LOGAN--!
I'M A WALKING SHIELD ARSENAL!
LET ME DO MY JOB!
GUARDING SCUM LIKE BULLFINCH AIN'T NO JOB!
IT'S A SENTENCE!
DON'T TURN IT INTO A DEATH SENTENCE, NICK!
FUNNY--!
I WAS THINKIN' THE SAME ABOUT YOU!
GOT TO GIVE CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE!
SHIELD DESIGNS THE MOST WONDERFUL TRICKS AND TOYS!

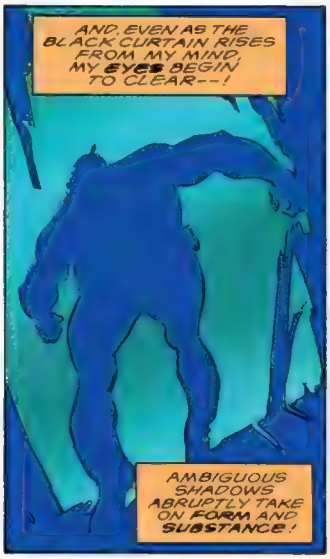
A STEEL RESTRAINING CABLE!
WHAT WILL THEY THINK OF NEXT?
UNFORTUNATELY, I HAVE BETTER!
FURY DOESN'T REALIZE HOW CLOSE TO THE EDGE HE'S DANCING!
I COULD EASILY USE MY CLAWS ON HIM!
BUT THAT WOULD PUT ME IN THE SAME CLASS AS BULLFINCH!
FOR ALL HIS SHIELD TRAINING AND COMBAT EXPERIENCE, NICK WOULD JUST BE ANOTHER STATISTIC TO ME!
ANOTHER HELPLESS VICTIM!
I APPRECIATE THE WAY YA BEEN HOLDING BACK, PAL!
BUT, I DON'T NEED YER STINKIN' CHARITY--!
GAS--!
BIG MISTAKE, FURY!
MAYBE YOUR FINAL ONE!

BLINDED!
DAZED!
BARELY ON THE BRINK OF CONSCIOUSNESS!
I SUDDENLY FIND MYSELF FORCED TO RELY ON PURE INSTINCT!
UFF
AND THAT'S WHEN I'M THE MOST DANGEROUS!
INSTINCT IS THE REALM OF THE BEAST!
THE BERSERKER WITHIN!

FURY MAY NOT EXACTLY QUALIFY AS A FRIEND, BUT HE'S CLOSE ENOUGH.
I NEVER INTENDED TO RISK KILLING HIM!
HE'S ONLY HUMAN, AND I NEVER WOULD HAVE GONE AFTER HIM WITH THE SAME ABANDON AS SHIV!
BUT NOW, BEREFT OF SIGHT AND SMELL, I AM TRAPPED WITHIN A COCOON OF TOTAL DARKNESS--
--AND COMPASSION IS AN EXTRAVAGANCE THAT I CAN NO LONGER AFFORD!
I PUT MY FAITH IN REFLEX! MY TRUST IN INTUITION!
I ALLOW THE ANIMAL TO GUIDE ME--
--AND PRAY THAT IT DOES NOT DEMAND BLOOD--!
ONLY THEN DO I PERCEIVE A VAGUE SENSATION OF MOVEMENT TO MY RIGHT--!
I LEAP-
--BUT MY LUCK IS RUNNING TRUE TO FORM!
ALL BAD!

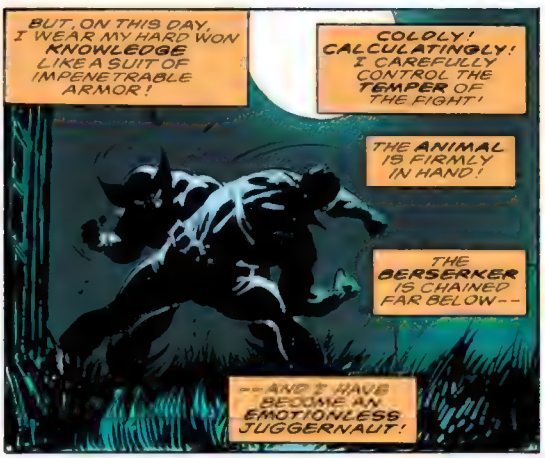
EVEN AS I STRUGGLE TO KEEP GOING, AS I STRAIN AGAINST MY OWN PRIVATE BLACK HOLE--
--THE STARTLING SIMILARITIES BETWEEN MY CURRENT SITUATION AND THIS ENTIRE CASE SUDDENLY COME CRASHING DOWN!
FROM THE VERY START, I BELIEVED THAT I WAS PURSUING A MONSTER!
HUMAN IN FORM, BUT BESTIAL IN NATURE!
A FOUL AND MALICIOUS CREATURE OF INSATIABLE APPETITES!
AND YET, EVERY TIME I NEAR MY GOAL, I CAN SENSE THAT THE TRUE MEANING OF IT ALL IS SCUTTLING PAST ME!
HIDDEN WITHIN THE DEEP SHADOWS, IT SNEERS AT MY ARROGANCE--
--AND LACK OF INSIGHT!
TIME AND AGAIN, IT SHOUTS THE TRUTH IN MY FACE--
SNAP!
--PLEADING AND BEGGING ME TO UNDERSTAND!
BUT, IT ESCAPES AN INSTANT BEFORE I CAN EMBRACE IT--
--EVAPORATING IN MY ARMS, AS VAGUE AND INSUBSTANTIAL, AS A HAUNTING DREAM!

LIKE A BLINDING FLASH, THE REVELATION UNEXPECTEDLY BURSTS UPON ME--
--DRILLING INTO THE VERY CORE OF MY BEING LIKE A JAGGED HARPOON!
I SUDDENLY SEE THE DRIVING RATIONALE BEHIND MY PITILESS QUEST!
THE STUNNING EXPLANATION FOR MY RELENTLESS HUNT FOR BULLFINCH... AND OTHERS LIKE HIM!


AND, EVEN AS THE BLACK CURTAIN RISES FROM MY MIND, MY EYES BEGIN TO CLEAR--!
AMBIGUOUS SHADOWS ABRUPTLY TAKE ON FORM AND SUBSTANCE!

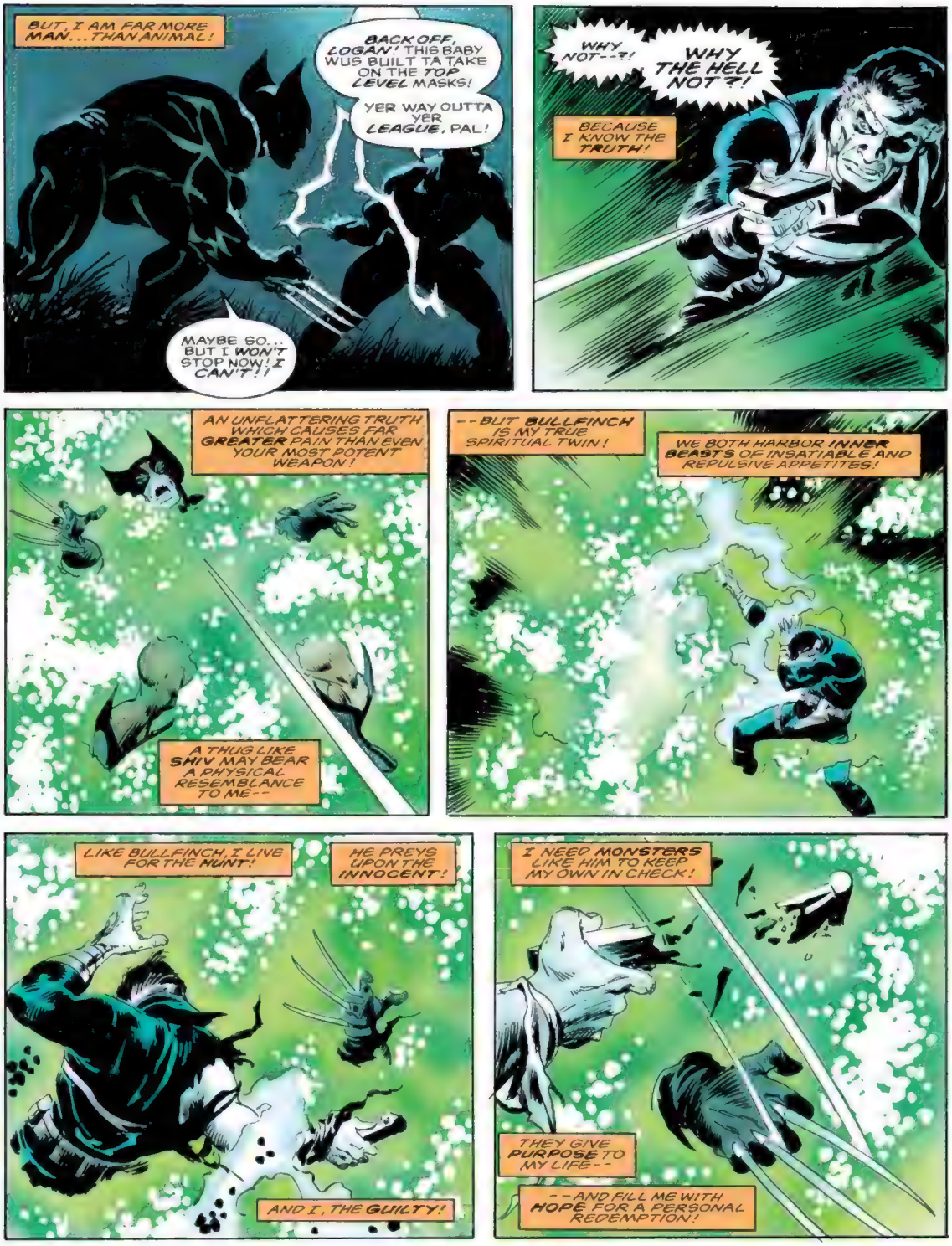
AND I LASH OUT--!
NOT AT THE TRUE ENEMY!
MERELY THE CONVENIENT ONE!

UNFORTUNATELY, NICK FURY IS NO PUSHOVER!
HE PUMMELS ME WITH A POWER AND LEVEL OF EXPERTISE THAT I'VE RARELY ENCOUNTERED!
ON ANY OTHER DAY, THE VICTORY MIGHT WELL BE HIS!


BUT, ON THIS DAY, I WEAR MY HARD WON KNOWLEDGE LIKE A SUIT OF IMPENETRABLE ARMOR!
COLDLY! CALCULATINGLY! I CAREFULLY CONTROL THE TEMPER OF THE FIGHT!
THE ANIMAL IS FIRMLY IN HAND!
THE BERSERKER IS CHAINED FAR BELOW--
--AND I HAVE BECOME AN EMOTIONLESS JUGGERNAUT!

MR KAPELAND, OUR ASSOCIATION WITH COLONEL FURY IS PROVING TO BE FAR LESS THAN SATISFACTORY.
RELEASING HIS MEN WAS AN ACT OF IRRATIONALITY!
PERHAPS WE SHOULD RETHINK OUR COMMITMENT TO HIM.
I AM IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT, MR. BULLFINCH.
IN FACT, I HAVE ALREADY MADE ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS...
HOWEVER, THEY ONLY APPLY TO MYSELF!
THE CARTEL HAS MADE ME AN EXTREMELY LUCRATIVE OFFER FOR AN ADVANCE COPY OF YOUR TESTIMONY...SO THAT THEY CAN MAKE THE APPROPIATE ADJUSTMENTS TO THEIR ORGANIZATION
Y-YOU HAVE BETRAYED ME---?!
NOT AT ALL!
I HAVE MERELY TAKEN THE OCCASION OF YOUR IMMINENT RETIREMENT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPAND MY CURRENT CLIENT BASE
BUSINESS IS BUSINESS.
I ASSUMED THAT YOU WERE NOT EXPECTING A FORMAL LETTER OF RESIGNATION.
THE CARTEL HAS ARRANGED FOR A SPEEDBOAT TO BE WAITING FOR ME AT THE NORTHERN END OF THIS ISLAND!
I PREFER TO FLY SO IT'S YOURS... IF YOU CAN REACH IT!
WHY CAN'T I JOIN YOU IN THE HELICOPTER?
TRUST ME, YOU WOULDN'T LIKE ITS DESTINATION.
I ADVISE YOU TO RUN, MR. BULLFINCH. YOUR LONG TERM PROSPECTS FOR SURVIVAL ARE DIMINISHING WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT!

STAY DOWN, NICK!
I...CAN'T!
YOU OUGHT'A KNOW THAT BETTER'N ANYBODY!
YEAH!
I DO.
BESIDES, I GOT ANOTHER GIZMO FOR YA!
A BIO-ELECTRIC ZAPPER!
THE TECH BOYS DESIGNED IT SPECIAL FOR YOU SUPER-JOCKS!
A DEVASTATING WHIRLWIND OF PAIN INSTANTLY SWEEPS ACROSS MY ENTIRE BODY!
BLISTERING ME FROM THE INSIDE ON OUT!
I WUS REALLY PRAYIN' I COULD SPARE YA, BUT--!
END IT NOW, LOGAN!
NOW WHILE WE'RE BOTH STILL BREATHIN'!
THE ANIMAL WITHIN BEGS ME TO HEED HIM!
IT WANTS TO RUN!
TO COWER IN THE DARKNESS.


BUT, I AM FAR MORE MAN... THAN ANIMAL!
BACK OFF, LOGAN! THIS BABY WUS BUILT TA TAKE ON THE TOP LEVEL MASKS!
YER WAY OUTTA YER LEAGUE, PAL!
MAYBE SO... BUT I WON'T STOP NOW! I CAN'T!!
WHY NOT--?!
WHY THE HELL NOT?!
BECAUSE I KNOW THE TRUTH!
AN UNFLATTERING TRUTH WHICH CAUSES FAR GREATER PAIN THAN EVEN YOUR MOST POTENT WEAPON!
A THUG LIKE SHIV MAY BEAR A PHYSICAL RESEMBLANCE TO ME--
--BUT BULLFINCH IS MY TRUE SPIRITUAL TWIN!
WE BOTH HARBOR INNER BEASTS OF INSATIABLE AND REPULSIVE APPETITES!
LIKE BULLFINCH, I LIVE FOR THE HUNT!
HE PREYS UPON THE INNOCENT!
AND I, THE GUILTY!
I NEED MONSTERS LIKE HIM TO KEEP MY OWN IN CHECK!
THEY GIVE PURPOSE TO MY LIFE--
--AND FILL ME WITH HOPE FOR A PERSONAL REDEMPTION!

NICK--?
NICK?
YOU STILL WITH US, FELLA?
T-TAKE A LOT MORE'N YOU'VE GOT TA SCRATCH THIS OL' WARHORSE FROM THE RACE!
GLAD TO HEAR IT!
N-NO HARD FEELINGS!
I... I GAVE THE MAN MY WORD!
I HAD TO TRY MY BEST!
YOU DID FINE, NICK.
NO ONE COULD HAVE DONE BETTER!
IT'S A SHAME THAT BULLFINCH WON'T BE ABLE TO THANK YOU IN PERSON!

NO NEED TO HURRY, KAPELAND.
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
I...DIDN'T EXPECT TO SEE YOU SO SOON!
I GOT A NASTY HABIT OF RUINING PLANS LIKE YOURS!

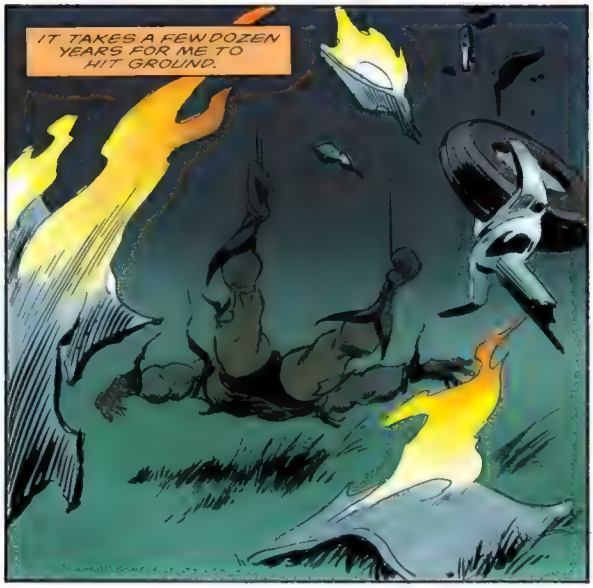
NO NEED TO GET VIOLENT, MY FRIEND!
AFTER ALL, I DO BELIEVE THAT MR. BULLFINCH IS YOUR PRIMARY CONCERN.

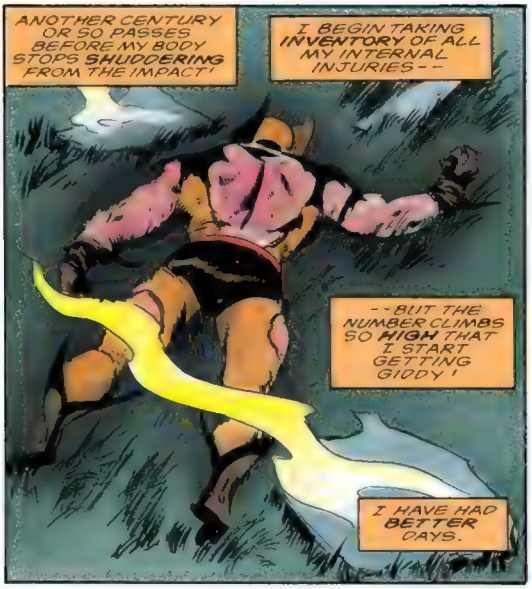
EVEN AS WE SPEAK HE IS RACING TOWARD THE NORTHERN END OF THE ISLAND... WHERE A SPEEDBOAT AWAITS!
EVERY SECOND YOU DELAY HERE BRINGS HIM CLOSER TO FREEDOM!

IF YOU STILL INTEND TO CATCH HIM, YOU HAD BEST BEGIN AN IMMEDIATE CHASE!
NOW, IF YOU WILL FORGIVE ME, I MUST ATTEND TO SOME OTHER BUSINESS!

BUSINESS--?!
I CAN JUST GUESS THE TYPE OF BUSINESS A MAN LIKE KAPELAND HAS ALREADY LINED UP FOR HIMSELF!
HE HASN'T QUITE REACHED MONSTER STATUS, YET--
--BUT, HE'S CERTAINLY ON THE FAST TRACK!
A SMART MAN WOULD JUST MIND HIS ONE BUSINESS, AND KEEP WALKING.
YEAH...

. RIGHT!


IT TAKES A FEW DOZEN YEARS FOR ME TO HIT GROUND.


ANOTHER CENTURY OR SO PASSES BEFORE MY BODY STOPS SHUDDERING FROM THE IMPACT!
I BEGIN TAKING INVENTORY OF ALL MY INTERNAL INJURIES--
--BUT THE NUMBER CLIMBS SO HIGH THAT I START GETTING GIDDY!
I HAVE HAD BETTER DAYS.

I DESIRE NOTHING MORE THAN TO REFRESH MYSELF WITH A COOL SWIM IN A POOL OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS.
INSTEAD, I GRIT MY TEETH AGAINST THE STABBING PAIN, AND SLOWLY FORCE MYSELF UP--!
I HAVE MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP.
MILES...AND BULLFINCH!
LIKE A GROTESQUE PARODY OF LIFE I HALTINGLY SHAMBLE FORWARD.
A BARELY LIVING SCARECROW ON A MISSION OF RETRIBUTION.
DOES IT TAKE MINUTES. HOURS...OR DAYS BEFORE I FINALLY SPY MY QUARRY?
WHO CAN SAY?
I ONLY KNOW THAT I EVENTUALLY DO.
NO! NO! LEAVE ME ALONE!
THIS ISN'T FAIR! I WAS WILLING TO MAKE A DEAL!
I WOULD HAVE PAID A SIGNIFICANT PRICE FOR MY CRIMES!
THERE WAS NO SANE REASON FOR YOU TO HUNT ME DOWN!

I AM NO ANIMAL!
I'M A MAN!
I CAN'T HELP THE WAY I AM!
IT ISN'T MY FAULT!
I NEED HELP! UNDERSTANDING! TREATMENT!
NOT PUNISHMENT!
OH GOD--! I NEVER MEANT TO HURT ANYONE.
I-IT JUST ISN'T FAIR!
DON'T KILL ME!
PLEASE DON'T KILL ME!
THIS IS THE FIERCE MONSTER THAT I STALK?
THIS TERRIBLE CREATURE WHICH I RAISED TO SUCH GRAND DIMENSIONS WITHIN MY MIND?
HE HARDLY SEEMS WORTH THE EFFORT.

HE...HE'S NOTHING MORE THAN A RABID DOG!
BEATEN AND COWERING, HE IS AS TERRIFIED, AS HELPLESS AND AS INNOCENT--
--AS A CHILD?!
MAYBE IT IS COMPLETELY UNFAIR!
MAYBE HE DOES DESERVE MERCY FAR MORE THAN VENGEANCE.
MAYBE I REALLY SHOULD LET HIM LIVE...
YEAH, RIGHT!

JOSKO
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Two men, once allies, now implacable adversaries. A man known as Logan, the Wolverine, has taken an oath to protect a boy from an insatiable child molester and international criminal: the bloated human obscenity called Bullfinch. Logan always keeps his word. A fact not lost on one Nicholas Fury, the redoubtable Director of the most powerful secret agency in the world–SHIELD.

The duty-bound Fury has sworn to grant immunity from prosecution to a smug Bullfinch in exchange for his cartel-busting testimony in court. Though if an enraged Logan has his way, the vile drug smuggler will never reach a courtroom alive. These are the unswerving paths taken by two men whose vows will plunge them into a violent conflict from which only one may survive.

Lush, tropical locales highlight this electrifying account of subterfuge, duplictiy–and the awesome eruption that occurs when powerful, determined men cross swords in their contrasting pursuit of life-and-death goals.

BLOODY CHOICES is a compulsive page-turner crafted in the world famous Marvel Manner. You must not miss it!

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